

# Manzullo speaks in Chicago

## Representative says U.S. must restore manufacturing jobs

By OWEN R. BRUGH  
The Northwest Herald

CHICAGO — Restoring manufacturing jobs is as important to national security as it is to the economy, U.S. Rep. Don Manzullo told the Illinois Manufacturers Association on Friday.

Manzullo, R-Ill., is chairman of the U.S. House Small Business Committee. Manufacturers around the country, and in northern Illinois especially, have been hit hard by the recent recession.

But some policymakers in Washington do not understand the problem, Manzullo said, even as the last

U.S. company that produces large-scale equipment goes out of business.

"People are asleep at the switch," Manzullo said. "They just think, 'Well, if we lose manufacturing jobs, we'll pick it up somewhere else.' It's just bad economics."

Illinois has lost almost 20 percent of its manufacturing jobs in the past three years, said Glen Johnson, the manufacturing association's incoming board chairman. More people in Illinois now are employed in the public sector than by manufacturers.

"If this continues, manufacturing will disappear from Illinois in 15 years," Johnson said.

About 720,000 people work in manufacturing in the state, according to information from the association.



**Manzullo**

## Manzullo

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"The facts are that the average manufacturing job pays \$44,000 a year," Johnson said. "The average service job pays \$22,000 a year."

Manzullo presented the group his plan to restore jobs. The plan includes tax breaks for companies that keep jobs in America, requirements that the federal government buy American-made products, and an effort to reduce medical-insurance costs.

The congressman had a U.S. Army beret with him to illustrate how the government spends taxpayers' dollars.

About 614,900 Army berets were to be made in China. However, Congress forced the

Army to buy American-made berets and clothing, saving textile jobs, Manzullo said.

Now, about 50 percent of the goods bought by the federal government are made in America, he said.

Manzullo also stressed the need to stop China, South Korea and other Asian countries from artificially deflating the value of their currencies, which makes imported goods from those countries cheaper in America.

Although some regulations about the practice are included in various multilateral trade agreements, Manzullo said it will take political might to end the practice.

Manzullo praised the Bush administration's decision Thursday to lift tariffs on steel.

For every steel-producing job in America, 59 people work

at steel-consuming jobs, he said.

Manzullo opposed the tariffs from their inception, breaking with Republican Party leadership.

The tariffs cost small businesses about \$650 million in increased costs, Manzullo said.

"Tariffs should only be used as a last resort," he said.

Despite the effect of world trade on some American industries, Manzullo said, the free-trade agreements of the 1990s still make sense.

The problem is that the regulations in the agreements need to be enforced, he said.

Association chief Johnson summed up the stakes for the manufacturing industry.

"Right now," he told his members, "we are in a battle for our lives, our livelihoods and future generations."